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ABSTRACT

The current movement for educational reform follows earlier realizations that the nation's industry and infrastructures have been neglected. President Reagan has responded inadequately to the crisis in education, and Americans will not accept Reagan administration initiatives that do not continue and expand existing successful programs, such as those involving students targeted by Title I (now Chapter 1) and Head Start. Ninety-nine percent of the changes in education proposed in recent reports critical of the present system should not be proposed at all, for most concern matters of common sense that should always inform educational practices. But, because we have moved far away from where we should be, educational reforms are needed, especially as concern proposals of merit pay and differential pay for teachers, the Minnesota Supreme Court's approval of a form of tuition tax credit or deductions, and the issue of teacher quality. With regard to acquiring talented teachers, schools must offer competitive salaries and remove violent, disturbed, or disruptive students from classrooms. In addition, they must allow teachers to teach subjects in which they have training, reduce excessive workloads, and modernize the administrative structure of schools. (A transcript of the question-and-answer session following the address is included.) (RH)

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Address by Albert Shanker
National Press Club Luncheon
September 12, 1983

Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here.

We are here at a most important time for American education -- a time of great optimism for the future. In the past we have had periods of great interest in education nationally. And, of course, every year there is interest in education locally. But the topic now is "The Crisis in Education." There is probably no single speech that's been delivered more often than this one at the local and state level in American history. But there is an annual crisis, whether it's the state legislature or the bond issue or the bargaining negotiations or something else. They were all crises, I am sure, but we now have something which is quite unique in our history.

This is not a period of time in which there is a great baby boom and everyone is interested in education because we've got to find more teachers for the new customers, or we've got to build more buildings as we did in the 1950's and 1960's. Quite the opposite is true. We are in the midst of a period of decline. For a number of years many of us sat around tables trying to figure out just how we would pull together an effective political coalition at a time when there would be fewer and fewer parents, or at least parents with children in school would be a much smaller percentage of the voting public than they have been in years past. This second type of occasion, when there is usually great interest in education, is a Sputnik-type event. A single thing happens which leads the American people to believe that someone else got there first, or did it first, or did it better and we should have done it better. There is a great blow to our ego and to our expectations and we muster a good deal of effort to see that it does not happen again. That dies down rather quickly.

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This again is not a time when we have a Sputnik, so we don't have a large number of customers flooding the schools making it a politically sexy topic. Nor do we have a single event. What we have for the first time in our history is a rather mature analysis on the part of people in power, many of them in business, many in government, as to what the long term human resource needs of this country will be. I believe that the business and political communities have arrived at the conclusions that we need to do more, to invest more and to reform education largely as a result of two recent, but earlier experiences.

We will all remember that four or five years ago the nation discovered that we had not rebuilt our auto plants or our steel industry or our rubber industry. We still see headlines asking the question as to whether these conditions will continue to exist in the future. And so we had national media focused on the whole concept of re-industrialization -- the fact that if you don't constantly rebuild your plants somebody else is going to come along and do better, and we won't have them.

A year or two later we discovered something else; that bridges were starting to fall, that we had to close roads, and that water and sewage works and harbors were inadequate. Then we had front page stories and entire issues of national news magazines devoted to the decaying infrastructure that became a matter of national priority.

Now we are facing the realization that there is a third area of national neglect. Even if you rebuild your industries, even if you revitalize your infrastructure, if you don't invest in human potential and do for people what you now realize you must do for factories and bridges and tunnels and harbors, the nation is simply not going to prosper and grow. So for the first time we have

the very interesting phenomenon of, for example, an education reform measure in California. Something that came through at $2.7 billion over a two year period. Something being led, not by the teachers union, not by AFL-CIO, not by the parents association or school boards association, but by the California Business Roundtable -- with, by the way, a good deal of opposition from the business community and those who did not want higher taxes.

So it is a moment of great opportunity. One that is reflected in the series of national reports that have come out. I'd like to say that the American Federation of Teachers endorses almost all of what's been said in these reports. They have properly focused on the notion that we have failed to invest, and they have also properly focused on the idea that it is not enough to say that we have to spend more money. There are things that have to be done with that money, and even things that can be done without money in terms of standards, in terms of curriculum, and in terms of the necessary demands that we make on everyone in the system.

I like all the reports. I like one that's about to come out from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching called "High School." But I think that perhaps the greatest impact comes from one put out by the federal government's commission itself because of its title, "A Nation at Risk." It's short. Everybody can read it. It's pretty inflammatory, and it exaggerates. I don't mind the exaggerating. I think that when you want people to escape from a theatre when there is a fire, just yelling fire is enough. You don't have to give a long description of the whole process. I think that the people who wrote "A Nation at Risk" definitely made the decision to state an objective description of the direction they felt the nation should move. I think they did a pretty good job.

So, after this preface, the first thing that I'd like to call your attention to is a study that was done by the Public Employees Department (PED) of the AFL-CIO. We have distributed to you parts of it which show the impact of the proposed cuts in education by the Reagan Administration. They show the actual impact because Congress did not go along with all the proposals of the Administration. The analysis also includes an inflation factor because it's very easy for any President or Secretary of Education to stand up and say that the dollars have not been reduced or even that the dollars are slightly increased. If you don't take real costs into account or consider the number of recipients who have to be served in a given program, you're not talking about whether you have made a cut, whether you've stood still, or whether you've moved ahead.

I want to draw a conclusion not only from the figures of the PED report, but also from the national report "A Nation at Risk." I would like us to think not so much of the argument for numbers or dollars cut, but just to raise the question: if a commission appointed by the Secretary of Education, and undoubtedly approved by the White House, has reached the conclusion that our nation is at risk -- not education is in crisis, not teachers aren't paid enough, not that the state or local school system is at risk, but -- our nation is at risk; is it possible for the President of the United States to fulfill his constitutional responsibilities if the nation is at risk by doing nothing more than making speeches urging other people to do something about it? We think not. So, I predict, not because the President read "A Nation at Risk," (certainly his first response indicated that he had not), rather because the polls show that education is the number one issue along

with unemployment that in the months to come we will see some initiative on the part of the Administration.

I would suggest that no initiative on the part of this Administration should be acceptable to the American people unless the Administration not only continues but expands those programs which now exist and have proven to be successful. We've had many government programs that are unsuccessful. We have many that are of doubtful validity, and the political parties and candidates can argue about those. But if you take a look at the test scores of students over the last decade and a half, there is one group of students -- and only one group of students -- in this country that is doing better today than they did ten or fifteen years ago. They are students who were targeted by Title I, now Chapter I, and those students who were targeted by Headstart. Those are programs strongly linked to the civil rights commitment of this country, programs which have worked and ought to be continued.

Now I'd like to move from the question of the Administration's actions and responsibilities to a second point that has to do with some of the reforms being proposed. First, the American Federation of Teachers believes that 99 percent of the changes being proposed in all these reports shouldn't be proposed at all. Some recommendations are such common sense that anyone who knows anything about education never should have strayed from these things in the first place. The idea that a child should not automatically move on from one grade to another if the child does nothing, makes no effort and learns nothing should not be called a reform idea. Children shouldn't learn that you get exactly the same rewards for failure as for success. Other examples: that you hire a teacher merely on the basis of a college credential when you know

that college degrees mean all sorts of different things, and you don't bother to test a math teacher to find out if the teacher knows mathematics or if the English teacher knows English. The idea that you can't learn everything there is to learn in school, and that you ought to learn to work by yourself a little bit by doing some homework. Just hundreds of these things -- to think that these are now considered reforms -- shows how far we have moved as a society in the direction of educational insanity. Common sense would make it very hard for anyone in the street to believe that these are "reforms" we would have to struggle to get. Yet because we have moved far away from where we should be, and that we will be moving back in that direction, does not mean that everything that's been proposed makes a lot of sense.

I would just like to touch on several reform ideas that are before us. One of them deals with a series of proposals on merit pay and differential pay for teachers. There is a large body of knowledge in the business world on these questions. And that large body of knowledge leads us to the very definite conclusion that in some cases merit pay works, in some cases it's a disaster, in other cases it has no effect at all. Anyone who's been out there, who's seen reward schemes of different types, knows that these are the very definite conclusions we come to. Now, why a President of the United States or anyone else should run across the country proposing as the answer to all of education's problems something which may work in some cases, is disastrous and meaningless in others, I don't know -- except that maybe he wanted to pick a fight. If he did, he picked it. But not with us. We're willing to talk about it and consider it. We don't want to make that the national issue.

It doesn't deserve to be the national issue. I do think that merit pay as an issue ought to be considered by teachers and other educators. Not so much as whether it's a good or bad idea itself, that's one issue we ought to talk about. But there's another question, too. Suppose the Governor of Tennessee or some other state comes along and says, "My people in this state are not very excited about paying higher taxes -- even for a very noble cause like education. But I've hired some very excellent pollsters who found that the people of this state are willing to pay much more to improve education. So much more that we could provide kindergartens for everybody. We could provide special schools for disturbed children and do special things with training, but attached to this idea is the notion of rewarding some teachers more than others. With this suggestion I find that all of a sudden people out there get so excited that they're willing to spend a lot more money."

Well, I think that teachers and educators ought to be willing, in exchange for substantially increased financial commitments to education, to at least meet the public half way. But it happens that in a democratic society the opinion of the people makes a difference. Sometimes the people may be wrong on some specifics. But it would be a terrible shame for a dozen or more states in our country -- where education is in an impoverished state and the people are willing to come through with large amounts of money -- for anyone to say that they refuse to accept an offer because the money isn't allocated in precisely the pure way they wanted it.

It's like saying, "I'd rather see the schools of this state suffer and go down, fail to attract decent people or fail to provide proper educational services for children, because I don't happen to like this particular proposal."

That's irresponsible.

Another proposal for change has received new life because of the recent Supreme Court decision in Minnesota. It is the proposal for some form of tuition tax credits or deductions. The decision of the Supreme Court was most unfortunate for a number of reasons. At the very time when states across the country are moving to improve education, and educators are ready to meet the reformers and engage in some flexible conversation, we're unfortunately about to re-open an issue which had been laid to rest. Instead of asking what the public schools should be doing, how should we hire our teachers, how should we fire them, what should be in the curriculum or how do we treat our students -- I can see one or two dozen states across the country where the major issue will be what, if any, and how much money should go to private and parochial schools. The Supreme Court found a way, five to four, of saying that this was not really aid to non-public institutions. That this was really aid to students because deductions could be made for public school expenses like band lessons and gym suits.

If you analyze the proposal you can see how ludicrous an interpretation this is.

Another question which is raised by national reports is the most serious element in the current education crisis. We can take care of curriculum by passing a law saying use the following book. Take three years of mathematics. Take three years of science. Put the following into an English course. Don't promote a student "unless." Make sure students take examinations. We can do all that by legislation. The one thing we cannot do by legislation is find a sufficient number of talented teachers and to be able to make whatever other decisions that we make in the way of standards effective.

In the past we had quite a supply of talented teachers. We got them during the Depression because teaching was a secure job. We got them for a little while after the Depression because people were afraid of other professions. We got them between World War II and the Vietnam conflict because teaching in some schools was a draft exemption, and fighting in Harlem was considered superior to fighting in Korea or Vietnam by some people. And then, of course, we got a large number of very talented women who did not have other opportunities. It was either teaching or nursing, or otherwise it was jobs that were non-professional.

But we don't have any of those people anymore. So, for perhaps the first time in the history of this country, the public education system is responsive to market forces, and can no longer count on a pool of talented labor that is coming in -- not on the basis of market sensitivity -- but on the basis of some completely extraneous factor.

How do we get teachers? You have no problem at all if you agree with the National Education Association's traditional position. They believe that you don't test teachers, or if you do test them, the test doesn't count. But it makes a truly big difference if a math teacher doesn't know math, or an English teacher doesn't know English. We can't just pile warm bodies into our classrooms with no sense of mastery of the <u>profession</u>.

I feel that there needs to be some accountability. And I think that part of the recent crisis is that the American people are also demanding accountability. People in this country are paying a lot for public schools. They're going to pay a lot more. And they have a right to get something for their money.

Florida, which has an entry-level exam, found that fifteen or twenty percent of the prospective teachers could not pass a sixth grade arithmetic test. That's great for the State of Florida! They're getting some teachers who can do the seventh grade math instead of the sixth grade math. Of course, those who flunk the test move over to most of the other states that have no test at all. So Florida has a slight advantage; the other states get these applicants.

So how are we going to get talented teachers during this demographic change? None of the other reforms mean anything if we don't solve this problem. I started with the notion that we have to maintain a high standard both through testing, and through some sort of an internship period which will tell us whether the prospective teacher has the human qualities which are necessary to succeed on the job. But the single most important factor in attracting people who are coming out of college -- and who know their math and their English and their science and their foreign language -- is that someone from a school district has to meet them the same day that someone from IBM meets them and the same day that they're met by headhunters from fifteen corporations. They have to be able to say, "Come to this school district; we will offer you a salary that's equal to or approximately the same as all those other salary offers."

Instead what we've said to the prospective teacher is, "We are not going to pay you much now. We can't give you the $18,000 that IBM will give you. We're going to give you $12,000. But we've got a merit pay plan in our state, and thirteen years from now if somebody says you're a great teacher, you'll get a bonus."

Well, if anybody knows anyone in our society who has that sort of delayed gratification as part of his or her make-up, I'd like to meet that person. We'd hire them if they're good, but they're not built that way anymore. So the first thing is we've got to be competitive.

Second, you're not going to get anyone to teach in a classroom (who wants to teach math, or English, or science or anything else) if they are going to spend 20 or 30 or 40 or 50 percent of their time with some violent or disturbed or disruptive youngster. We must find some way of removing and giving help to those youngsters who have those special problems so we can say to the math teacher, "You're going to teach math." If a person wants to be a psychiatrist, or a social worker, or a jailor that's the field he'll go into. A person who loved school, loved mathematics or English, loved his or her teachers, doesn't want to go into a place where they are going to have a job that's totally different from what they envisioned. So that's second, and very, very high on the list.

Third, the teacher will have to be able to get satisfaction from teaching the subject assigned. Imagine that I've got a masters degree in mathematics, and I'm willing to be a teacher. I love mathematics so much and I think it's so important for young people to know what I know. But, if you put me into a high school as a mathematics teacher, and put me into a room with a bunch of kids who are doing third grade remedial arithmetic because they never learned it in elementary school, I can tell you that even if you pay me a decent salary, I'm not going to stay there very long because I am not using the knowledge and skills that I have acquired. You're not appealing to me in terms of job satisfaction. In a good many of our schools

we take teachers who are interested in science and math and English and put them with students who are so far behind that we discourage them from staying.

Part of being able to teach the subject has to do with the conditions of work. Think of an English teacher who sees five classes a day and has 30 children in each class -- 150 students. One of the things we find is kids can't write. Why can't they write? Because they're not asked to do it every day. And doing it isn't enough. The teacher has to mark the papers. The student has to know this is right or that is wrong. Writing is something that you can do well at only with practice. How is a teacher to go home and do a good job marking 150 papers? Can't do it. We can enact all the legislation we want. You will not get many competent people to do this. We've got to change the conditions -- fewer students, someone else marks them, some other system -- but we've got to find a way in which teachers can be satisfied with their jobs.

One final point on the question of attracting teachers. The schools of our country are among the last factories of the 1920's that we have in the United States. We read a lot of books about theory Z. We read a lot about how Quality of Life programs have been put into various auto plants and institutions throughout the country. We read about how companies <u>care</u> about what their employees think. They listen to them, try to make them more satisfied and happier so that they will be motivated. Yet what we have in schools are institutions which in the 1920's were staffed by people who were either high school graduates or one year training school graduates. They were just a level above the kids that they were teaching. And in each school there was a boss or foreman known as a principal. He or she was the one who

went to college. Much lower down were these teachers who were the workers on the educational assembly line, and the boss told the workers what to do. Perfectly proper. That's the way our whole society was organized.

Well, today, most of our teachers are more educated in their own fields than their principal -- the principal can't be an expert in all fields. As a matter of fact, the principal may be an unsuccessful coach who had to be made a principal so someone else could be moved in as a successful coach of the team. I'm not saying that being a coach is a bad preparation for being a principal in terms of trying to get teamwork in his schools. But we will not have professionals of high quality remain in an institution when someone in some other field, for whom they have no great regard, is going to sit in the back of their room and tell them how to teach mathematics or English or something else.

Those are the parts of the program.

Now I would like to conclude, since I have quite a few members of the press trapped here for a few minutes, by saying something that the most recent Gallop Poll in education and all the reports have said about tuition tax credits.

It has a single issue constituency. There are lots of people, and certainly not a national majority, but a certain number of people in the country who say "I don't care how you vote as my Congressman on any other issue -- you could be great on tax policy. You could be terrific on international affairs. But if you don't help me pay my kids' tuition in school, I'm going to vote against you." Whenever you have a single constituency of that sort, it is powerful. And this is an Administration that tends to organize single constituencies on a whole bunch of issues. This one is no exception.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Q. Few teacher strikes have been predicted for this school year. Do you expect the situation to last? Why or why not?

A. We predicted that there would be fewer teacher strikes, and I predict that this is a situation which will continue to exist. It's quite analogous to the situation that exists in many of our industries. And education is, in a sense, an endangered industry. If you know that if you go out on strike it may lead to increased support for tuition tax credits -- or that there's a great deal of interest in your state in adding money and raising salaries and improving the curriculum -- but if you go out on strike today, the public relations will be so bad that a lot of politicos will use that as an excuse not to do anything to bring about improvements. These are all factors which teachers and their leaders take into account. I think that you'll find that the handful of strikes that have taken place across the country are almost exclusively defensive strikes. That is, they are not strikes where the teachers are trying to make an awfully lot more. They are ones where management is taking this time as an opportunity to try and take things away that teachers have had in the past.

Q. Do you support the labor-management collaboration on teacher evaluation in Toledo?

A. Toledo, for a number of years now, has had a rather unique arrangement where the teachers' union essentially runs the probationary period. It helps to train the new teachers, and at the end of the period of time the union has agreed not to defend any teacher who is let go. It's individuals from the union who make the decision that some people should not spend their careers in teaching; therefore, it would be difficult for the union both to dismiss that person and at the same time to defend him. It's something that ought to be looked at.

I think it's an excellent program. It has worked very well there, and I think it would work very well elsewhere. I think that we are moving in the direction of greater peer responsibility in terms of teachers exercising some roles that would be traditionally considered management roles. We have to be careful though, because of the Yeshiva decision, that in being more cooperative with management, we don't end up with some legal decisions saying that therefore we've lost our rights to collective bargaining.

Q. Dr. Ellis White, reknown psychologist at Columbia Teachers College, has determined after years of research . . . I'm going to shorten this question up a little . . . that there is no way to determine what makes a good teacher. How does money make a better teacher, and don't misunderstand me, I want more money for teachers.

A. Well, I don't think it's quite right to say that there's no way to determine what makes a good teacher. I think what that person is saying is that you would probably have some disagreement if you are trying to find the best teacher. You have different models of outstanding teachers. You have the charismatic teacher. If you were lucky you had one or two of them when you went to school. You know, the kind of teacher that you felt terrible if the bell rang, or you might even have stayed after school, or you might have come in on Saturday -- somebody very satisfying.

There's another kind of great teacher -- somebody that you hated all through the course, and a year later you said, "Boy, she really gave me the stuff that made me superior!" That's one that might be rated pretty low on first look, but you have to look again.

First, if you walk into the room and you see the teacher doesn't know the subject that he or she is teaching, then that teacher is not only not outstanding or excellent, or good, but that teacher is incompetent and shouldn't be a teacher. That removes "X" percentage alright. Then a teacher does know his or her subject matter but you walk in year after year and the kids are yelling, screaming, jumping out the window, flying paper airplanes and everything else. I think it's reasonable to assume that that teacher isn't getting through. So that's another group of people. Now, it is very hard to evaluate and say, "This is person number one and number two, and number three," and to put them in numerical order according to who is best and worst.

It's also true that different parents want different thing for their kids. There's the hard-driving parent who wants a teacher who is going to load up the kids and force them to do homework. There's the other parent who feels, "Gee, my kid is very fragile; my kid might just crack under this thing; I don't want a teacher who is going to be strident; my kid needs a teacher who knows his stuff but is warm and loving and provides protection." There are different things you need for your own children, at different times. That doesn't mean that there aren't outstanding people. That doesn't mean that there aren't incompetent people. If you try to number them from 1 to 1,000 you're not going to do a very good job. If you try to divide them into top half and bottom half, you'll do a better job. You'll just make some mistakes on the borderline.

I'll say one thing, I think that this notion that you can't really evaluate teachers has been pushed a little too far. If you want to say you can't do it perfectly, I agree. But if any teacher or other organization thinks that the best way to defend teachers and protect teachers is to go out

and tell the public that we really don't know anything about what's good and what's bad, well, if we don't know anything about what's good and what's bad, why should I be a teacher? Why shouldn't the man in the street walk in, punch me in the nose and say, "Hey, if you don't know what makes a good teacher, I think I'm a better teacher than you are. Out, I'll take over." If we give certificates to some people and say they have a right to teach -- and we don't give it to other people -- then we had better stand up and say we know something about why some people are allowed to teach and why other people aren't allowed. So those who think that they're really protecting and defending the profession by claiming that we're totally ignorant aren't very smart.

Q. Wouldn't you be able to do more for education if your union worked more closely with the other major teachers group, the NEA? What are the prospects for reducing AFT/NEA conflict, or is that not an important goal?

A. I think that's a very important goal. I think the two organizations should merge and have one organization, and settle all these differences inside through the democratic means that organizations of this sort have. Let the members or the conventions vote on it. I would be glad to put our differences out to a referendum of all the teachers in the country -- that is, whether teachers should be tested before they come in, whether tests should count, whether students should be tested, whether we should have strong disciplinary procedures, curriculum. All these differences we have with the NEA, and I have no fears as to how a vote would come out. Teachers became teachers because those are the things that they believed in. But I don't think that working with the NEA is always in the best interest of the teachers or of education in the country. It's not in the best interest of education when the NEA is wrong, and they have been wrong on testing teachers. They're still wrong on it.

They now say it's O.K. to test teachers before they come in the field as long as the test doesn't count. That is, if the teacher has other wonderful attributes, the fact that the math teacher flunks the math test shouldn't disqualify the math teacher. They now say that they're in favor of standardized tests for students. But they're going to go into every state to support a truth in testing law which means that you have to publish all the standardized tests which unstandardizes them. You would have to make up a brand new test every time. If you're not giving the same test, you can't tell whether students are doing better or worse year after year.

So, I favor a merger of the two organizations. I think it would end a lot of the wasteful conflict. I think we could resolve our disputes through a democratic process of voting within the organization. I believe AFT would win on most of the issues. If we lose, I would accept the judgement of the voters. I'd have to in a system of that sort.

However, I do not believe that it's always in the interests of teachers or education for both groups to work together, where two groups have differing opinions. Sometimes I think that one of the best things that happened to American education during this period is that there were two teacher organizations. Just think; suppose that all of America's teachers during the past four months had been represented by an organization that doesn't want to remove violent kids from the classroom, and that thinks standards don't mean anything. Suppose that the American public believed that all the teachers were in one organization, that two or three million people in the most powerful, biggest organization in this country took the anti-education, anti-intellectual positions of the NEA. If that had happened during this period of time, I think the chances

of having major businessmen and governors support improvements and greater funding for public education would be almost zero. I think that we have a greater chance of improvement because they know that there are some teachers and at least one teacher organization willing to work with them. AFT has earned this support because we believe in standards.

I'll go a step further: the NEA is moving to change it's position and it will ultimately be forced to change it's position. It's position will become our position because of the pressure which we were able to exert on it externally. If we hadn't been around to do that, I think the American educators would have been really stuck with a bunch of indefensible positions for a very, very long period of time.

The same thing is true in our differences on bilingual education. They have favored the program of maintaining the original language of the student, and we favor a rapid transition. The purpose of bilingual education must be to teach the child to function in the English language as quickly as possible.

Q. A two-part question. Should colleges abolish courses in education? How do you feel about there being a national proficiency exam for all teachers at the entry level?

A. I don't mind the idea of a national proficiency exam in education at all levels. It's not a bad idea. States or local school districts could come up with something better or something that met similar standards, but there would still be a need for a national model. There was an attempt to do that with the National Teachers Exam but it didn't quite work out.

Should the colleges abolish courses in education? Well, over the last 20 or 30 years we went too far in the direction of education courses and away from subject matter. There is no question about that. A person could be a teacher, take 36, or 40, or 50, or 60 education credits, and not know English or mathematics, or not know how to write. Educators some years ago put over the idea that you don't teach English, you teach children. Well, that's just silly. You teach children what? Of course, that question does add one factor -- that is that it is possible for one to be a brilliant mathematician or scholar in English and still hate to work with children, or not be able to recognize a child who needs some special help. I think that the present tendency to put a much greater emphasis on subject matter and to make subject matter competency a necessary condition for teaching is good. But it is not a sufficient condition in itself. If you want to be a teacher you ought to know something about your profession. You ought to be able to read articles dealing with research so that over the years you can find out whether something is better or worse. And you ought to be able to recognize a child who needs some special help. I don't think we need 36, or 60, or 90, or 100 credits in education. It could probably be done with a much smaller number. I think if I had to choose between the two, that we have people that take only education courses or only subject matter, I would choose only subject matter. But fortunately we don't need the extreme. You can have a better balance.

Q. Do you expect the Administration to offer its own educational improvement bill, and if so, what will be in it?

A. The Administration really hasn't asked me to write its legislation. I'd be happy to do so. Not because I want to see the President re-elected, but it's my business to represent my members and do what I can for public

education. We deal with anyone in public office whether we love them or not. If we had to deal only with people that we really loved, we wouldn't have very much work to do. But, I think that the Administration will have to come up with something. They already have a math-science program, but the proposal is not as good as some of the proposals coming out of Congress. I really don't know what it would be.

I offered a proposal to the President about a week ago. I think that an item that would not necessarily be a huge expense but which would have very great impact would be for the federal government to design a program very much like the ROTC. Our problem is how to get the best and the brightest to come into teaching. The best and the brightest, even after we raise salaries to $18,000, are going to be offered more than that. The best and the brightest may not want to stay for an entire life-time. I would guess that a program in which the Administration says that it would pay for the college education of youngsters who are in the top, let's say, 25 percent in SAT's (or some other national quality standard) would have their college education paid for if they would agree to teach for, let's say, a period of five years. That's quite an inducement. Having five years of teaching under your belt would not hurt you with either IBM or a law firm or anybody else. There are a lot of teachers who stay for a short time, and that experience is generally counted by businesses and business communities as a plus. It helps you pay it off and would bring people into education. It would really mean that the schools would have several groups of people. One group would be a hermit core that would stay on. But there would be a group that would come in for periods of five years. I would think that would have a substantial amount of pay-off. I don't know whether that's under real consideration by the Administration or not.

Q. You mentioned the impact of proposed cuts in education and listed some figures. But on the student level, just what is that impact going to mean?

A. You have the number in front of you and I don't. We've said it takes a certain amount of money to cover a child in Chapter I. By keeping dollars where they are, or even by increasing them slightly because of inflation and other factors, the numbers of children have been reduced. We have it broken down into congressional districts. We've got it broken down into cities. We've got it broken down by states. The last time I saw the figure was about a week ago but it's over a million youngsters that have been removed as targeted. I want to reiterate that this is a program that works. There are hundreds of thousands of youngsters who have graduated from high school, who have jobs, who have gone on to college, who never would have had they not received the special help that they got from these programs. The statistics are very good for these are cost effective programs. You help a child in school for a certain number of years, then they're able to proceed on their own education rather than having to deal with various transfer payments for the rest of their lives. I really do not understand why any Administration that's concerned with cost cutting items would cut something which is relatively inexpensive and assures the intellectual health of a youngster, rather than end up with perpetual programs where you have to support that person throughout life.

Q. Mr. Shanker, we have one more question for you. But, before we get to that I'd like to present you with a certificate of appreciation from the National Press Club for being with us, and a Press Club jacket. And since you were brave enough to come through our construction outside, I don't think

you should leave without a Press Club hard hat.

Shanker. Does it have a union label on it?

A. It's union help, you can bet on that.

Q. And the last question says that if the terms are not mutually exclusive, would you rather be known as an intellectual, an educator or a labor leader?

A. Well, clearly they're not mutually exclusive! We have quite a tradition in the labor movement. I think that the problem frequently is that leaders of teachers would like to separate teachers and education from all the other areas and concerns. That includes on the one hand, the world of ideas and on the other hand the world of work. One of the reasons that the American Federation of Teachers is strongly opposed to the creation of a separate education department is because we felt that the last thing in the world teachers needed was to be isolated from everyone else. They were already isolated enough -- locked up for their whole lives with a group of children and other teachers. I think that there's not only not a division, but there shouldn't be, and that's one of the things that's tended to be wrong in education in the past. People in education have not seen a relationship. One of the very good things about this whole reform movement is it's bringing together a lot of people who were not brought together before. The people from the world of ideas, people from the business world, people who are engaged in teaching and educational administration, and people in labor unions are getting together and seeing things about the same way on educational issues. Very optimistic.

Thank you, Mr. Shanker. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.